

REMARKS

Claims 1-30 are pending in the application. Claims 1-4, 8-11, 18-25, and 28-30 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §§ 102 and/or 103. Claims 5-7, 12-17, 26, and 27 have been objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim. In addition, the drawings have been objected to under 37 C.F.R. 1.83(a).

Claims 1, 5-7, 12, 18, 26, and 28 are hereby amended as shown above. Claims 31-39 are hereby added. In view of the amendments and the following remarks, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the Examiner's rejections and objections.

I. THE DRAWINGS

The Examiner objected to the drawings under 37 C.F.R. § 1.83(a), because they allegedly do not show every feature of the invention specified in the claims. According to the Examiner, "the at least one door that can separate one of the plasma torches from the open space in the vessel, the AC plasma torches include a torch gas that has a flow rate, and wherein the flow rate of the torch gas can be adjusted to vary the flames of the AC plasma torches, a current is applied to the AC plasma torches, and wherein the current can be adjusted to vary the flames of the AC plasma torches, a tap cart, at least two taps are positioned in the vessel, must be shown or the feature(s) canceled from the claim(s)."

Pursuant to 37 C.F.R. § 1.121(d), Applicants respectfully submit the enclosed corrected drawing of Figure 2 in response to the Examiner's objections. Each of the Examiner's objections is addressed with the proposed corrections shown in red. In particular, the drawing now shows each of the items identified as missing in the drawings by the Examiner. Applicants respectfully request approval by the Examiner of the proposed drawing corrections.

No new matter has been added as these changes are supported in the specification. Applicants have amended the specification, however, to reflect the additional number designations shown in the corrected drawing.

II. THE CLAIMS THAT HAVE BEEN OBJECTED TO

Claims 5-7, 12-17, and 26-27 were objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim. The Examiner stated that these claims “would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.” Applicants have accordingly amended claims 5-7, 12, and 26 to incorporate all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Claims 13-17 are dependent upon amended claim 12, and claim 27 is dependent upon amended claim 26. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request allowance of claims 5-7, 12-17, and 26-27.

III. THE CLAIMS THAT STAND REJECTED UNDER SECTIONS 102 AND/OR 103

Claims 1-4, 8-11, 18-25, and 28-30 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §§ 102 and/or 103. All of these claims now recite that the flame emitted by the AC plasma torch can be varied according to the waste being treated by adjusting the “flow rate of the torch gas” and/or that the flame can be varied by adjusting the “current applied to the AC plasma torch.” These limitations originally appeared in claims 5 and 6 (addressed above in Section II), which the Examiner said would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. None of the references relied upon by the Examiner (U.S. Patent No. 5,606,925 to Boen et al.; U.S. Patent No. 4,361,441 to Tylko; U.S. Patent No. 5,908,564 to Titus et al.; and U.S. Patent No. 5,534,659 to Springer et al.) alone or together disclose an apparatus or method for treating waste with

these claim limitations. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner remove his rejection of claims 1-4, 8-11, 18-25, and 28-30.

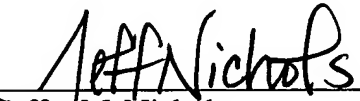
IV. NEW CLAIMS

Applicants have added claims 31-39, which are all dependent on claims 5 or 6, as amended. Applicants respectfully request allowance of these claims as well.

V. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, Applicants believe that they have overcome each of the rejections and objections. The application is therefore in condition for allowance and early notification of allowance is respectfully requested. If, for any reason, the Examiner believes that the amendments and remarks do not put the claims in condition for allowance, the undersigned attorney can be reached at (312) 245-5393 to resolve any remaining issues.

Respectfully submitted,



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